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LIVE STRING QUARTET PERFORMS IN WORLD PREMIERE OF *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*
Musicians play score commissioned from Paul Dresher alongside actors at Berkeley Rep

FEBRUARY 10, 2007 – Today Berkeley Repertory Theatre announced that, as part of its daring world premiere of *To the Lighthouse*, a live string quartet will perform on stage, debuting the brilliant new score commissioned from composer **Paul Dresher**. As part of Dresher's collaboration with Obie Award-winning director **Les Waters** and acclaimed playwright **Adele Edling Shank**, an accomplished ensemble known as the **Seventh Avenue String Quartet** will play alongside the actors throughout the show.

"I auditioned several quartets and chose a young group organized by cellist Alex Kelly," **Dresher comments**. "It's such a pleasure to work with these musicians because, in addition to playing chamber music, they have experience with jazz, rock, electronic music, world music, improvising... So, while this score is quite classical in style, that breadth of experience offers a range of expressiveness and precision that is wonderful for a composer.

"This piece starts as a play," he continues, "and eventually becomes like a concert. There's a remarkable scene without words in which music must capture the passage of ten years. Then, in the final scene, it almost transforms into opera – as much of the text is sung and music is the thread that dramatically ties everything together. So it's been a fascinating challenge to come up with a score that is both rich in sound and effective as narrative, one that allows all those elements to exist in a single, coherent piece of music. **I've never done this before, I've never seen it done before – and I can't promise you I've succeeded.** See the show and find out."

In this ambitious adaptation of *To the Lighthouse*, Waters and his talented cast bring **Virginia Woolf's** incandescent characters to life as Dresher's music illuminates their legendary home. Here a couple live, love, and endure; children play, fight, and grow; and a painter struggles to capture the transient beauty of life. The live quartet is one of many elegant touches with which this exceptional team transforms an extraordinary novel into unforgettable theatre. The four musicians are **Alex Kelly** (cello), **Justin Mackewich** (first violin), **Charith Premawardhana** (viola), and **Sarah Jo Zaharako** (second violin).

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1997 tony award for outstanding regional theatre / a nonprofit corporation since 1968

LIVE STRING QUARTET IN *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE* AT BERKELEY REP / 2 OF 3

Paul Dresher is an internationally active composer noted for his ability to integrate diverse musical influences into his unique personal style. He and his work have been heard around the world – including at BAM's Next Wave Festival, Carnegie Hall, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Lincoln Center, Munich State Opera, and the New York Philharmonic. A current Guggenheim fellow, he has collaborated with diverse artists such as choreographer Margaret Jenkins, poet June Jordan, playwright Charles Mee, and director Robert Woodruff. Dresher's previous commissions from Berkeley Rep include *Dream of a Common Language* and *Ravenshead*. He has also received commissions from the American Repertory Theater, Chamber Music America, Kronos Quartet, the Library of Congress, Meet the Composer, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, and Spoleto Festival USA. Dresher's most recent project was *The Tyrant*, a solo chamber opera for tenor John Duykers that premiered at Cleveland Opera and will be presented by Cal Performances in June.

Alex Kelly is a San Francisco-based improvising cellist and composer who has earned three bachelor's degrees, two Master's degrees, and a doctorate in music. He has performed with and composed for a variety of orchestras, chamber orchestras, new music ensembles, string quartets, cello quartets, jazz combos, rock bands, dance companies, and circus troupes – including the Eugene and Wichita Symphony Orchestras, the Hundredth Monkey Ensemble, and the New Pickle Circus. Kelly has premiered more than 150 new solo and chamber works and recorded on over 50 albums. He can currently be heard with the CKW Trio, Joan Jeanrenaud, Pamela Z, and the Paul Dresher Ensemble.

Justin Mackewich studied with Axel Strauss and Camilla Wicks at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he also served as concertmaster of the Conservatory Orchestra. He has won numerous awards, including the KPBS Classical Music Talent Search, the MTNA National Finals Solo Competition, and the VSA Panasonic Young Soloist Award, which led to his performing at the Kennedy Center. Mackewich performed with the Oregon Symphony Orchestra for the 2003-2004 Season, and appeared with his quartet on the PRI radio show, *From the Top*. He has studied at the Aspen and Park City Music Festivals, and also attended the Perlman Music Program, which allowed him to perform at Lincoln Center with the Perlman Players, under the baton of Itzhak Perlman.

Charith Premawardhana studied viola at the Interlochen Arts Academy, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Ohio State University, Rice University, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Since arriving in the Bay Area, he has performed with the Berkeley, Marin, Monterey, and

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Sacramento Symphonies and the Fresno, Reno, and Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestras. He has also worked in smaller ensembles, including Ensemble Parallele, the San Francisco Composers Chamber Orchestra, and San Francisco Lyric Opera. In the non-classical world, Premawardhana has recorded with jazz singer Madeleine Peyroux and performed with San Francisco's Shotgun Wedding Hip-Hop Symphony. He organizes and performs in Classical Revolution, a weekly chamber music series at Café Revolution in the Mission District.

Sarah Jo Zaharako studied classical music as a child and attended Oberlin Conservatory, where she combined her performance degree with a second major in arts education. Since moving to the Bay Area, she has incorporated free improvisation, jazz, Eastern European, and klezmer into her performance and teaching repertoire. In 2002, she completed an MFA at Mills College, where she studied violin with David Abel and improvisation with Fred Frith. Zaharako now performs and composes for local ensembles such as Gojogo, Scrappy, and Synchronopolis, as well as Matt Small's Chamber Ensemble and Aaron Novik's Floating World. Zaharako also creates music for dance: she recently premiered works with Ballet Counterpointe and the pre-professional program of Alonzo King's Lines Ballet, and is currently collaborating with choreographers Kara Davis in San Francisco and Amy Raymond in Amsterdam.

The cast for *To the Lighthouse* combines Broadway veterans with hot local talents: **Whitney Bashor**, **Noah James Butler**, **Monique Fowler**, **Edmond Genest**, **Lauren Grace**, **Clifton Guterman**, **David Mendelsohn**, **Jarion Monroe**, and **Rebecca Watson**. A team of distinguished designers has also been assembled for the show: **Annie Smart** (scenic designer), **Christal Weatherly** (costume designer), **Matt Frey** (lighting designer), **Darron L West** (sound designer), and **Jedediah Ike** (video designer).

Performances of *To the Lighthouse* take place in the Roda Theatre at Berkeley Rep. The show begins previews on February 23, opens February 28, and closes March 25. For tickets or information, contact the box office at **510.647.2949**, **888.4.BRT.Tix** (toll-free) or berkeleyrep.org.

ABOUT BERKELEY REP

Founded in 1968, the Tony Award-winning Berkeley Repertory Theatre has established a national reputation for its ambitious programming and dynamic productions. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Tony Taccone and Managing Director Susan Medak, Berkeley Rep seeks to engage its audience in an ongoing dialogue of ideas. Through its bold choice of material and vivid style of production, Berkeley Rep reflects a commitment to diversity, excitement, and quality. The company is especially well known for its presentations of important new dramatic voices and its fresh adaptations of seldom-seen classics. In 2001, Berkeley Rep opened the Roda Theatre, a 600-seat proscenium theatre that complements the 400-seat Thrust Stage, and the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, housed in the Nevo Education Center. The addition of these two buildings has transformed what was once a single stage into a vital and versatile performing arts complex.

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TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

FACT SHEET

WHO: Written by Adele Edling Shank
 Adapted from the novel by Virginia Woolf
 Music composed by Paul Dresher
 Directed by Les Waters
 Designed by Annie Smart (sets), Christal Weatherly (costumes),
 Matt Frey (lights), Darron L West (sound), and Jedediah Ike (video)
 Starring Whitney Bashor, Noah James Butler, Monique Fowler, Sophie Gabel-Scheinbaum, Edmond Genest, Lauren Grace, Clifton Guterman, Jack Indiana, David Mendelsohn, Jarion Monroe, Amara Radetsky, Gabriel Stephens-Siegler, and Rebecca Watson
 Featuring the 7th Avenue String Quartet: Alex Kelly (cello), Justin Mackewich (first violin), Charith Premawardhana (viola), and Sarah Jo Zaharako (second violin)

WHAT: *To the Lighthouse*, a world-premiere adaptation of the landmark novel

WHERE: Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Roda Theatre
 2015 Addison Street @ Shattuck, Downtown Berkeley

WHEN: Previews on 2/23 - 2/27/2007 – Performances on 2/28 - 3/25/2007

- Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays @ 8:00 PM
- Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
- Saturdays @ 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM
- Sundays @ 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM
- No matinees during previews

to the lighthouse / limited

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
feb 23-mar 25					feb 23	24
					8pm ●	8pm ●
25	26	27	28	mar 1	2	3
7pm ●		8pm ●	8pm ●	8pm ◆	8pm	2/8pm
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2/7pm		8pm	7pm	8pm	8pm ◆	2/8pm
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
2/7pm		8pm ◆	7pm	8pm	8pm	2/8pm
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
2/7pm ★	8pm	7pm	8pm	8pm	8pm	2/8pm
25						
2/7pm						

- docent talks
- previews
- opening night
- ◆ discussion
- ★ page to stage

Special Events –

Target @ Teen Night: Friday 2/23 @ 6:30 PM
Opening night: Wednesday 2/28 @ 8:00 PM
Docent presentations: Tuesdays 2/27, 3/6, 3/13, & 3/20 @ 7:00 PM and
 Thursdays 3/1, 3/8, 3/15 & 3/22 @ 7:00 PM
Post-play discussions: Thursday 3/1, Friday 3/9 & Tuesday 3/13 @ 8:00 PM
Page to Stage (free talkback with Dresher & Waters): Monday 3/19 @ 7:00 PM

HOW MUCH: Previews \$33 Sundays (2 PM & 7 PM) \$49
 Tues (8 PM) / Wednesdays (7 PM) .. \$45 Friday evenings (8 PM) \$55
 Thursdays (8 PM) \$47 Wednesday opening (8 PM) \$61
 Saturday matinees (2 PM) \$47 Saturday evenings (8 PM) \$61

- Discounts:**
- ½ price tickets available to those under 30 (some restrictions apply)
 - ½ price rush tickets for students and seniors sold ½ hour before curtain
 - 20 half-price HotTix go on sale Tuesday through Friday at noon
 - Groups of 15+ may contact 510.647.2918 or groups@berkeleyrep.org

TIX & INFO: 510.647.2949 – toll-free 888-4-BRT-Tix – www.berkeleyrep.org